

WWT/JNCC/SNH Goose & Swan Monitoring Programme

survey results 2009/10

East Canadian High Arctic Light-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota*

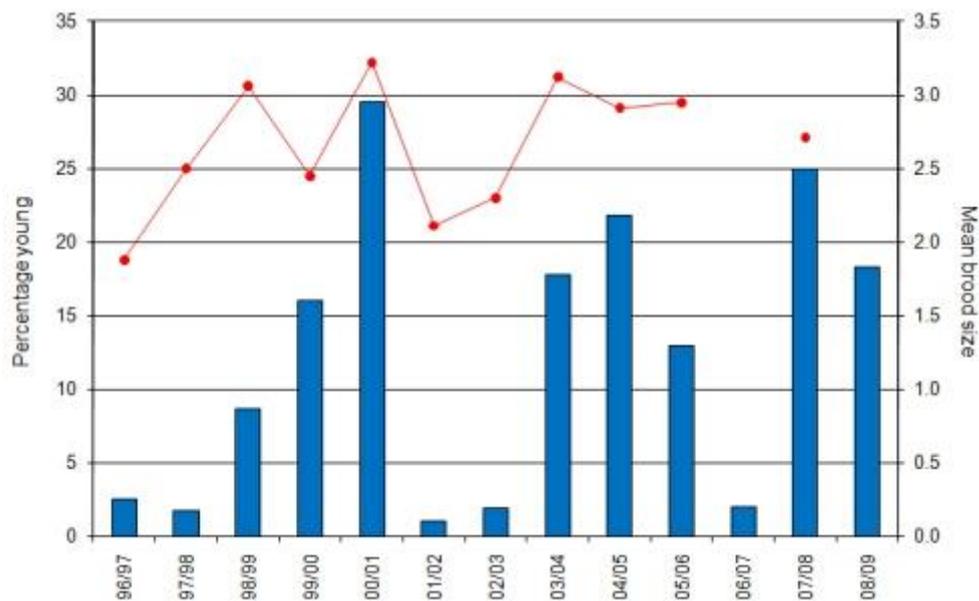
1. Abundance

Mid-October 2009 saw the fourteenth autumn survey of the East Canadian High Arctic Light-bellied Brent Geese. Ground counts were carried out around the coastline of Ireland and extending to parts of western Britain and northern France. An aerial survey of the main autumn staging areas in western Iceland was also undertaken. Counts were chiefly made over the weekend of 16-18 October.

With data outstanding from several sites it seems likely that approximately 38,000 would be a conservative assessment of the population in 2009/10. Peak counts included Strangford (26,041), western Iceland (2,239), Lough Foyle (2,200), Castlemaine Hbr/Tralee Bay (2,067) and Dublin Bay (1,303).

2. Breeding success

A sample of over 17,000 individuals were aged of which only 69 (0.4%) were juveniles.



The mean percentage of young (blue columns) and mean brood size (red circles) of East Canadian High Arctic Light-bellied Brent Geese, 1996/97 to 2009/10. Note; no brood size data are available for 2006/07, 2008/09 or 2009/10.

3. Discussion

Results from the 2009 International Census of East Canadian High Arctic Light-bellied Brent Geese indicate numbers were only slightly higher (less than 1%) than the previous year. Breeding success was the lowest recorded since the mid-70s, with the proportion of young being 18% lower than in 2008 and well below the most recent 10-year mean (1999/00-2008/09, $14.6\% \pm 3.2$ SE).

This report should be cited as:

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Goose & Swan Monitoring